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ABSTRACT

Electing the U.S. President and Vice President is a basic right and responsibility of every citizen of voting age. Even though it occurs every 4 years, the complexities of electing the president is not a concept that every person understands. This resource book aims to fill the gap in understanding by providing students with a learning-by-doing experience. In the book's week-long simulation, students become the candidates, the conventioneers, the voters, and the Electoral College members. Going step-by-step through the process, from candidates declaring their intention to run for office to the final Electoral College vote, students understand how the voters of the United States choose their leaders and how the popular vote that is cast at the ballot boxes relates to the final selection of the President and Vice President. Designed for use in grades 4-8, the book provides teachers with tools they need for staging a successful simulation background information for their students, day-by-day procedures, samples, issues for platforms and debates, and necessary forms for voting and record keeping. The format allows teachers to use the activity with as few as 15 students or with as many as 450 students. It involves important concepts for social studies education and also provides opportunities for researching, persuasive writing, public speaking, team work, and mathematics applications. (BT)

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Electing the President--The Electoral Process in Action.

Betty M. See

SO 034 380

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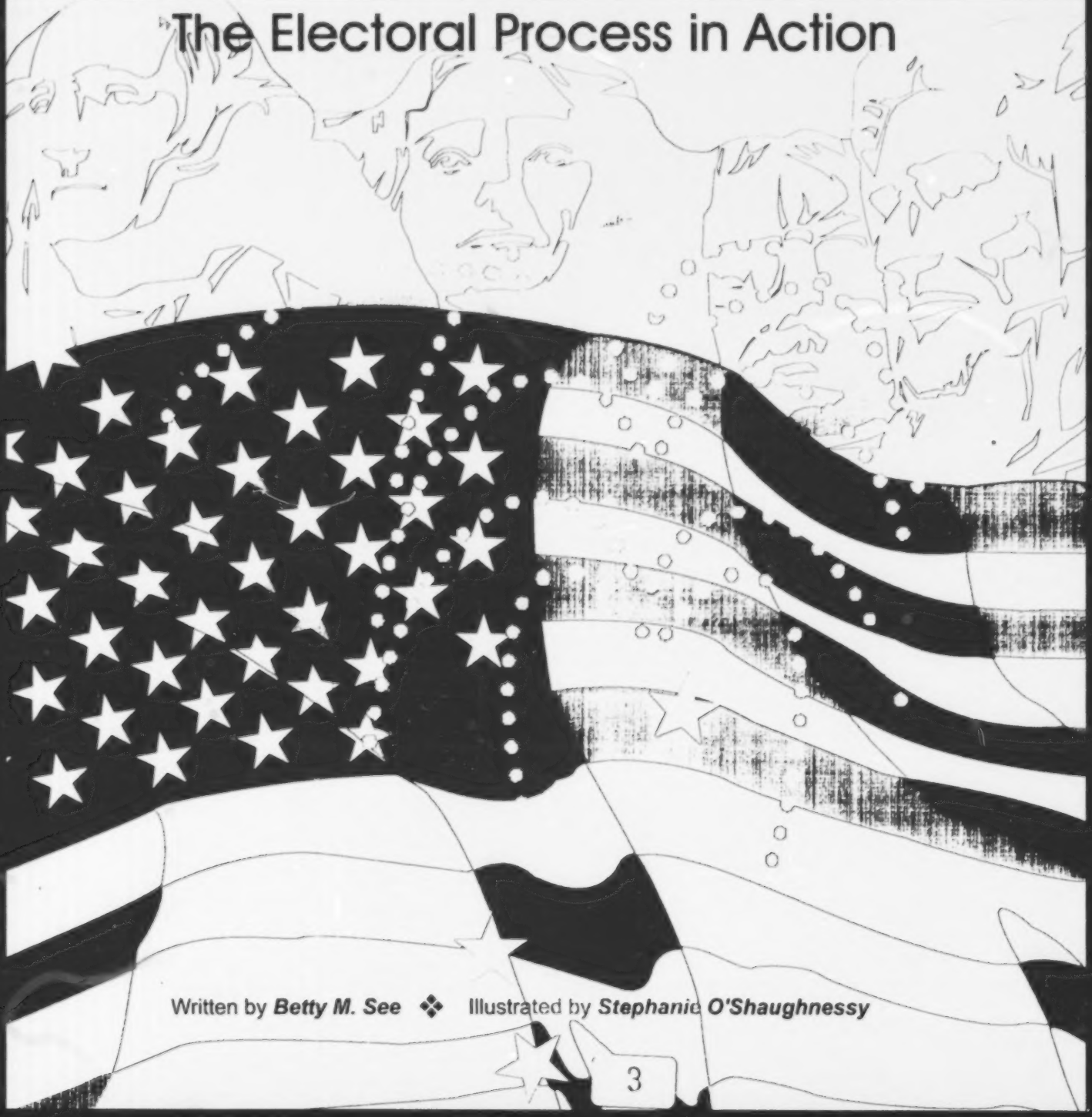
The Electoral Process in Action



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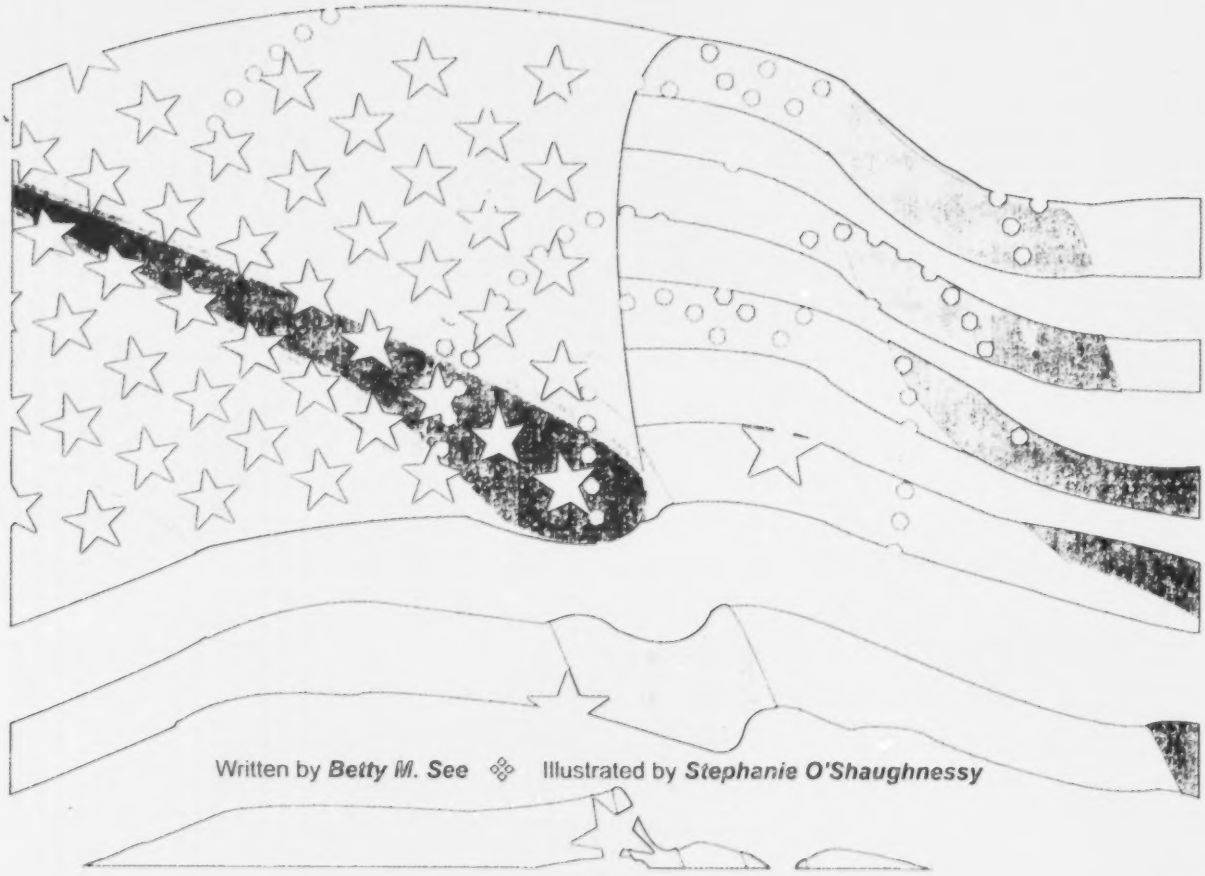

Written by *Betty M. See* ❖ Illustrated by *Stephanie O'Shaughnessy*

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☆ Introduction and Overview ☆

Why Do This?

"Why do this?" This may be a question your students ask you or perhaps a question you ask yourself. Why take seven days out of your teaching year to learn about how the leaders of our country are chosen? The reason is that it is important that students understand how the election process works, how a process that was put in place over 200 years ago has survived, and what happens to their individual votes.

Forget the fact that learning by doing means that students will remember the lessons long after they leave your class. Forget the fact that simulations are motivating and often draw out the more reticent learners in your classroom. You need to do this because it is important. The success of a democracy is dependent on an educated populace. This implies not only that the citizens can read and write but also that they are knowledgeable about how the government works and also about their rights and responsibilities. Voting is both a right and a responsibility. It is important that all citizens feel that they are a part of the process and that their votes count.

The Concept

The election of a president and vice president of the United States is unique in that the candidates who receive most of the popular votes of the citizens may not necessarily be the winners. The voters are actually voting for a slate of electors when they cast their ballot for the president and vice president. The candidates receiving the most popular votes in each state will receive all of the electoral votes for that state. This concept can be difficult for students to understand and to remember.

By holding a simulated presidential election, the students will understand not only our electoral college system, but they will become aware of the many steps involved in electing a president and vice president. This simulation will allow you to conduct an election on several different levels, depending on your classroom situation and the number of students involved. By actually taking part in the process, students will experience the electoral process first-hand and will see how important it is to vote.

Overview

This simulation works well with one class, several classes, or a larger student population. It has been done successfully with as few as 15 students and as many as 450. Upon completing the activity, the students should have a good understanding of our country's multiparty system, the purpose of political conventions, voter registration, campaigning, and the Electoral College. During the simulation all students will become actively involved and should be well on their way to becoming more informed voters as adults.

Most of this text is instructions for the teacher. These instructions spell out the procedures for conducting the simulation. This includes:

- an overview and historical background that you can share orally with your students
- instructions for staging the simulation
- several forms that will be used in the simulation
- a copy of the parts of the U.S. Constitution that govern the election of the president and vice president.

Your Role

Prior to beginning the simulation you will need to give students background information about the election process. If this simulation is being used in conjunction with a unit on the Constitution or a unit on the political process, students will already have some basic knowledge of the electoral process. If not, you will have to provide an overview of the way our leaders are elected. This information is provided for you on pages 7 through 11 and handouts for students are provided on pages 39 to 45.

During the simulation you must remain an unbiased observer and consultant. Your role is to provide the guidelines and see that they are followed.

☆ Background Information ☆

Democracy

A democracy is a system of government that gives citizens the right to influence political decisions either directly or indirectly. Direct democracy (where citizens as a whole are responsible for making decisions) is possible only when the population is small. The United States has what is called a representative democracy. This means that while citizens are given the right to vote on issues and leaders, many of the decisions are not made by direct popular vote, but are decided by elected representatives.

Elections are an important element of a democracy. They reinforce the government's authority and serve as a communication between the voters and the politicians. This assures that the government responds to the wishes of the majority of its citizens. In some countries voting is compulsory, and in some countries voting is not mandatory, but voter registration is automatic. In the United States, registration and voting are voluntary; as a result, we have a much lower voter turnout than other countries.

In electoral systems there are two ways of converting the citizens' votes to actual election of office holders. One is the majoritarian system in which the candidate who receives the plurality of votes by getting 50% (or some other measure) wins. The other system is the proportional system by which the distribution of seats is proportional to the number of votes cast. The selection of electors, and hence the selection of the president and vice president in the United States, is by the majoritarian system.

Primaries

While having primary elections and political conventions would be quite complicated and time-consuming and, therefore, not practical to include in the time constraints of the normal classroom, students should be aware of how the system works. You might want to explain the primary elections in the following way.

Most states hold primary elections on various dates throughout the spring of an election year. Candidates begin their campaigning early in the year. Since the elections are held on different dates, the candidates usually concentrate their campaigns on states whose election dates are the nearest. There may be many candidates early in the campaign. Candidates who do not do well in the early primaries usually drop out. As a result, by the time primary elections are held in some states in May or June, the field may be narrowed to only one or two candidates for each party.

Conventions

After all the primary elections, each party holds a convention and conducts an election to select presidential and vice presidential candidates and decide on a platform. The platform is a body of principles or issues on which the party takes a stand. The election of the presidential candidate is usually the most exciting and visible aspect of the convention. After the presidential candidate is selected, he or she selects a running mate (the vice presidential candidate). The procedure of deciding on a platform is not as visible and usually involves negotiations between party leaders and the party's two candidates.

When the political conventions are held in the summer, the delegates must vote on the first ballot for the candidate who won the state's primary election. If there is no candidate who has a majority of the votes on the first ballot, additional ballots are held until one candidate has a majority of the votes. After the first ballot, each delegate is free to vote for the candidate of his or her choice.

The Democratic and Republican parties have a fairly complex method for allocating convention delegates to each state. They are distributed according to state population, but other factors, such as electoral votes won by a state during the previous presidential election, may be considered. Since this method would be too difficult to implement in your classroom simulation, it is best to have one vote per student. Should you care to find out how each party determines how many delegates each state will have, you can access their web sites (www.democrats.org and www.rnc.org) where you will find detailed information.

Elector Selection

Article II, Section 1 of the United States Constitution deals with the election of the president and the vice president. The number of electors each state has is determined by the number of members that state has in the House of Representatives, plus the two senators each state has. Since the representation in the House is based on population, those states with the largest populations will have the most electors. There are 538 votes in all (435 representatives, 100 senators and 3 representatives from the District of Columbia). Usually, the political parties nominate their lists of electors at their respective state conventions. The states may choose to list these electors on the ballot or may only list the candidates for president and vice president.

Popular Vote

The presidential election is held the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November every fourth year. In each state, the candidate receiving the most popular votes for that state wins all of the electoral votes and the losing candidates get no electors. So when someone votes for a candidate he or she is really voting for an elector who will vote for that candidate. In some states electors are required to vote for their party's candidate, but in other states they may vote for candidates from other parties. The two exceptions to this are Maine and Nebraska where two electors are chosen by statewide popular vote and the remainder by popular vote within each Congressional district.

Electors Vote

The electors representing the party whose candidate received the most popular votes meet on the first Monday after the second Wednesday in December in their respective state capitals. These electors cannot be members of Congress or hold any federal office. They vote for their candidates and these votes are then sealed and sent to the president of the United States Senate. On January 6th, at a joint meeting of the House of Representatives and the Senate, the ballots are opened and officially counted. A majority of the 538, or 270 votes, is needed for a candidate to be declared a winner. Amendment XII of the Constitution gives the procedure for electing a president if no one candidate receives a majority.

History

When it was written into the Constitution, the use of electors was a compromise between using a direct popular vote and choosing leaders by inheritance or appointment. It was also seen as a way to share power between the states and the national government. In the early years of the electoral college, several states let their legislators choose the electors. By 1828 all states except South Carolina gave voters the ability to vote for the electors and then let the winning party's electors cast the state's votes for presidential candidate. There is no law that requires the electors to vote for the party they represent but it is rare that electors would cast a vote for someone other than their party's candidate.

Before the adoption of the 12th Amendment, the electors voted for two persons and the person with the majority won the office of president and the runner up was vice president. In 1796 John Adams and Thomas Jefferson finished first and second, making Adams president and Jefferson vice president even though they were fierce foes. In 1800 Thomas Jefferson and Aaron Burr, both nominees of the Democratic Republican party, received exactly the same number of votes. Though Jefferson was his party's candidate for president, it took the House of Representatives 36 ballots before Jefferson was elected. These problems led to the adoption of the 12th Amendment that required that electors cast separate ballots for president and vice president.

The total number of electoral votes has changed as our population and number of states have increased. In 1789, the first House of Representatives had 65 members. In 1910, the number of representatives was fixed at 435. As states were added, the number of senators (with two per state) increased to the present number of 100. With the District of Columbia's three electors, this makes a total of 538 electors.

Three Exceptions

Even after the passage of the 12th Amendment in 1804, the method of electing a president by the Electoral College has not been without its problems. Because the president is not chosen by popular vote, but is chosen by the electoral vote totals, it is possible that the candidate who wins the popular vote does not get enough electoral votes to win the election. There have been three instances when the candidates receiving the most popular votes were not elected president.

1876	Popular Votes	Electoral Votes
Samuel J. Tilden	4,284,020	184
Rutherford B. Hayes	4,036,572	185
total electoral votes		369

1888		
Benjamin Harrison	5,444,337	233
Grover Cleveland	5,540,050	168
total electoral votes		401

Had Grover Cleveland won this election, he would have served three consecutive terms, for he defeated Benjamin Harris in 1892 by over 300,000 popular votes and 132 electoral votes.

2000		
George W. Bush	50,456,169	271
Albert Gore	50,996,116	266*
total electoral votes		537

* Gore lost an electoral vote because one District of Columbia elector left her ballot blank to protest the District's lack of voting power in Congress.

There have been many people who have argued that the use of the Electoral College to determine the presidency is unfair. This procedure has not been changed, however, because legislators are reluctant to change any part of the Constitution that has served Americans so well for so long.

Eligibility Rules

Article II, Section 1 of the Constitution also lists the eligibility requirements for an individual to become president. Since the vice president assumes leadership if the president can no long continue in office, these rules also apply to the vice president. These candidates must be:

- natural born citizens of the United States
- at least thirty-five years old
- resident of the United States for fourteen years.

In addition, the presidential and vice presidential candidates for each party should be from different states. Amendment XII states that if the two candidates are from the same state, electors from that state can vote for only one of the candidates and have to cast their other vote for a candidate from another state. Not wanting to throw away a potential elector vote, parties will usually look for a vice presidential candidate who resides in a different state than the presidential candidate.

☆ Before You Start ☆

Electors

Look up the current apportionment of electors. Since the apportionment changes with each census, you will need to access a current reference to get a accurate count for each state. You can get an up-to-date apportionment at the national archive's web sites (www.nara.gov or www.archives.gov) and on several other web sites. Your representatives or senator's office can also supply this information. The census is taken every 10 years, so information gathered in the 2000 census will affect all elections until the census in 2010. The information in this book is based on the 2000 census.

Overview

It is imperative that the students understand the entire election process. They must see the whole picture before they begin the preliminary activities. This simulation works best if they already have some knowledge of the Constitutional and the historical background of our presidential elections. If they have not previously studied this, present the brief overview provided on pages 39 to 45. In particular, discuss the Electoral College and how the votes are apportioned to each state.

Divide Class

Decide how many students will be involved in your simulation. Divide this group into two political parties. You may do this randomly, or you may wish to form the two groups so they are balanced, in that each group has a couple of students who are outgoing enough and meet the qualifications to be candidates. These parties will each select presidential and vice presidential candidates at their conventions.

Eligibility Rules

Early in the simulation you will want to explain to the students that there are certain eligibility rules if someone wishes to become president or vice president of the United States. Tell them that there will be special rules for the purpose of your classroom election. Before you begin the simulation, you should make up rules that you feel are appropriate to your student population. For instance, you may wish to waive the "natural-born citizen of the United States" requirement and shorten the length of residency. A sample set of rules might include:

- A candidate must be at least _____ years old.
- A candidate must be a resident of your town for at least _____ months.

You can add other qualifications as you find necessary, but the qualifications should not be too restrictive.

Campaign Rules

On day four of the simulation your class will have to establish rules for campaigning. It will help if you give this issue some thought before you bring it up to the students. You need to give students some guidance about what are realistic and acceptable practices. You might want to establish rules about the following things:

- Times and places where campaigning may take place should be designated.
- Poster size and places where they may be displayed should be specified.
- Distribution of items such as candy or pencils should be discouraged as this gives an unfair advantage to students who have the means to provide them.

Platforms

You should prepare a list of issues that you feel are appropriate for the age and sophistication of your students. You can use the "Election Issues" (pages 27 to 30) as a starting point. If students propose other issues, it is a good opportunity to discuss what things are within the domain of the federal government and what things are handled primarily by state and local governments. On many issues there may not be clear-cut divisions between the role of the federal government and other jurisdictions, as many roles overlap or are influenced by the policies of the higher levels of government.

Ask students to decide which issues are the most significant in this election and take positions on these issues. In addition to the issues outlined on pages 27 to 30 some other issues to consider are:

- foreign policy
- export/import policies and tariffs on foreign goods
- social programs like welfare, job training, mental health
- campaign finance reform
- space exploration
- funding for the humanities and arts
- funding for science

Apportion Votes

One of the more important things you will do is decide how to divide up the states' electoral votes. Since this can be time-consuming, it is advised that you do it prior to beginning the simulation. Detailed instructions and examples are provided to guide you through this process.

Read through the detailed information on pages 19 through 24. Decide how you will divide the electoral votes. Divide the states so that each voter has approximately the same number of electoral votes.

Make Electoral Assignments

Duplicate the form on page 33 (Assignment of Electoral College Vote). Record the states that will be represented by each voter on the bottom portion of the form. Record the electoral votes for each state. Write the student's name at the top. Distribute the assignments on day four of the simulation. Remember that in most cases, students will play two roles: voters in the popular election and members of the electoral college.

Prepare Ballots

Prior to voting on day 6, the ballots for the electoral vote (page 35) should be duplicated and prepared. One ballot should be prepared for each state, noting how many electoral votes that state has.

In the case where one voting bloc (whether it is one student or several students) has been assigned only one state (such as California), they will receive only one electoral ballot, listing that one state. If more than one student is in the voting bloc, they will cast a popular vote using their popular vote ballots. After casting their popular votes, the candidate who receives the majority of votes in that voting bloc will be recorded on the electoral vote ballot.

In the case of a voting bloc (either one student for a group of students) that has been assigned several states, he or she will receive a ballot for each state. These ballots should be stapled together and labeled with the student's name or the number of the voting bloc (like voting bloc 39). If one person is representing several states, he or she must vote for the same candidate for all states. If there are several people in the voting bloc, each person will vote for the candidates separately (this is the popular vote; use the popular vote ballots), but once they have indicated their popular vote, the winning candidate (the one with the most popular votes) will be recorded on **all** electoral ballots (this is the electoral vote). See pages 22 or 23 for examples.

In the case of multiple classes, each class should be divided into groups of voters, each group representing one state or several states. When the voters in each group vote (the popular vote using the popular vote ballots), the majority will determine the candidate who will get all of their states' electoral votes. Three people, then, may vote individually (popular vote), but as a group, they will submit only one electoral ballot for the candidate who got the majority of their votes for each state they represent. In the example on page 24, Class 3 will cast 19 individual votes on popular ballots and will then submit electoral ballots for the seven states they represent. The class will have a total of 45 electoral votes for these seven states.

☆ The Simulation Day by Day ☆

Day 1
Introduction

- Introduce the procedure for electing the president and vice president of the United States.
- Explain how the popular vote is used to determine the electoral vote and how the president and vice president are actually elected by the Electoral College.
- Show students the map on page 31 and help them understand how the states with larger representation in congress have more electoral votes.
- Explain that citizens must be registered before they can vote. Have all students complete the first two columns of the "Voter Registration" form (page 32).
- Explain that this simulation does not deal with the state primaries. While in real life, this is an essential first step before the parties meet and choose their candidates, it will not be reenacted in class. The simulation will begin with the party conventions.

Day 2
Candidacy Declared

- Divide students into two groups representing the Do Right party and the Fair and Square party.
- Make sure students understand the requirements for holding the offices of president and vice president.
- Each group will meet separately. Any student wishing to run for president will declare his/her candidacy by signing a "Declaration of Candidacy Statement" (page 26). If working with a large group, you may require endorsements from two other students. This requirement may be waived with smaller groups.
- Campaigning to become the party's presidential nominee begins.

Day 3
Party Conventions

- Each party will hold its convention to select presidential and vice presidential candidates and to decide on a platform. At this stage, students do not represent different states.
- Candidates will give speeches and try to convince members of their party to vote for them. While they may use the "Election Issues" (pages 27 to 30) as a guideline to help them prepare their speeches, there should also be emphasis on their personal qualifications.
- Students not running for office will select their party's candidate. It is more practical to allow one vote for each student rather than to allow them to represent states as is done in actual conventions.

- Election for each party's nominee is held. Should no candidate receive a majority of the votes on the first ballot, have a run-off between the two candidates who have received the most votes. The losing candidates may instruct their delegates to vote for one of the two remaining candidates, but all delegates are free to vote as they choose. The winning candidate will then select his/her running mate for vice president.
- Each party should decide on its platform. It is important that presidential and vice presidential candidates for a particular party agree on their stands on important issues.

Day 4
Election Campaign

- This begins a new part of the simulation. During the convention students could only vote for candidates in the party to which they were assigned. At this point, the conventions are over and students are no longer delegates. Instead, they will represent the voting public. They **do not** have to vote for the candidate who was elected at the convention in which they took part. They may now vote for either candidate. At this point students are assigned the state or states they will represent. They will now have two identities – one will be the single vote they cast (the popular votes), and they will also represent certain electoral votes.
- Discuss rules for campaigning. Have students brainstorm a list of ways to present their qualifications and stands on issues to the voters. These can include speeches, posters, buttons, and press releases. Under your direction and following the guidelines that you developed prior to beginning the simulation, the class should decide on the rules for campaigning.
- Assign the electoral votes as evenly as possible using the instructions and examples on pages 19 to 25 as a guide. The three charts on pages 22 to 24 show samples of how this was done with a class of 15, a group of 46 students and a larger group of 240 students. It also shows the results of the election and how popular votes determine electoral votes. You can use the blank form on page 25 to assign electoral votes.
- The "Assignment of Electoral Votes" (page 33) should be completed and distributed to students. Instead of assigning voting blocs, you can have students draw from a hat for the states they represent. This procedure provides a better chance that students who might not otherwise be motivated will have a greater influence in the process.
- Candidates should be aware of which students represent each state. Show this information on a map or give students name plates with their states on them.
- Candidates should begin campaigning to try to persuade other students to vote for them.

Day 5
Speeches

- Candidates will give their final speeches and try to convince students to vote for them. The presidential and vice presidential candidates for each party should each address different issues of the party's platform in their speeches.
- Students may use "Election Issues" or a list you provide to help them prepare speeches. Explain that the issues listed are very general and the candidates should explore these ideas and decide how they feel about each one. They should look up facts that will support their positions. It is possible that opposing candidates may have similar viewpoints or that a viewpoint on an issue may be somewhere between the two extremes. Give candidates a time range for the length of their speeches (3 to 5 minutes). Younger students may require less time.

Day 6
Election Day

- Students will re-sign the voting register (page 32) in the third column and have their signatures verified. Assign one student to be the elections clerk who will verify signatures.
- Distribute ballots. In cases where one student represents all the votes for a voting bloc (either one state or a group of states), you can skip the popular vote and only use the electoral ballots. In cases where several students represent a voting bloc, you will need to distribute a popular ballot to each student and also electoral ballots for each state the voting bloc represents.
- Students cast their votes. The popular vote (one vote for each student) and the electoral vote (for the state or states each voting bloc represents) should then be tallied. You can use the form on page 25 or the form on page 36 to record votes.

Day 7
Evaluation

- The students will compare the popular and electoral votes each candidate received. Discuss what candidates might do in an actual campaign to try to gain the most electoral votes (like campaign in the most populous states or campaign in the states that are divided).
- If this is an actual election year, have students observe how candidates try to influence voters and which states receive the most attention from each nominee.

☆ Adaptations ☆
for an Election Year

Adaptations

During an election year you may not wish to have students participate in a mock election as outlined on pages 15 through 17, but you may want them to understand the Electoral College process and be able to relate this to the real election as they follow it. In this case, you will not reenact the convention part of the campaign and will not have any student candidates. You will, however, assign the electoral votes as in one of the scenarios described in "Apportioning Electoral Votes." Ballots should list the names of the actual candidates running for president and vice president. Have students vote for the actual candidates. Translate their votes to electoral votes and tally the electoral votes to determine the winner. After the election, compare your results to the actual national election tallies. You may also wish to compare your popular vote to that of your community. This method works particularly well with a large group of several classes or an entire school population.

Extensions

- Research each candidate's stand on various issues. Make a chart to show the differences (or similarities) among the candidates.
- If several classes participate in the election, post a map of the state or states a class represents outside the classroom door.
- You may wish to have students research their states for information such as the state motto, industries or agricultural products, history, or famous individuals who were born there.
- A large chart listing the states, their electoral votes and the school, local and national popular votes may be posted in a central location.
- Have an older class or the gifted class organize a school-wide election, preparing and distributing ballots and tallying the final vote.

☆ Apportioning Electoral Votes ☆

The Procedure

One of the first things you will need to do before you begin the simulation is decide how to apportion the electoral votes. Depending on the number of students in your group, you may have one student representing several states, or with larger groups, several students representing just one large state with many electors.

To determine the number of electoral votes each student represents, divide 538 (the number of electoral votes) by the number of students involved in the simulation.

Example
Smaller Groups

Example
538 ÷ 46 students = 11.70 or an average of 12 electoral votes per student

Using this as a rule of thumb, you may assign one student any of the states having between 10 and 15 electoral votes (for instance Massachusetts, 12 votes). You might also assign this student one or more states whose total electoral votes are between 10 and 15 (for instance, Iowa 7 and Kansas 6). For states having a larger number of electoral votes, you may assign more than one student. For instance, Texas (34 votes) might have three students.

In the case where one student represents several states, his or her one vote translates into electoral votes for his or her selected candidate for **all** the states represented. In the case of a student representing Iowa and Kansas, one popular vote for the Do Right candidate gives 13 electoral votes to this candidate.

Example
Multiple Classes

Using the same formula, divide the number of electoral votes (538) by the number of students involved. For example, if you had 240 students, you would have:

538 ÷ 240 = 2.24 or an average of 2 electoral votes per student

Using this as a guideline, assign each classroom one or more states. Classrooms with a larger number of students would be assigned states such as California (55), New York (31), or Texas (34). Try to apportion the states among the classes as equitably as possible to keep the ratio of students to electoral votes fairly even; however, try to have an odd number of students representing each state to avoid the problems a tie might cause. Some classes may represent several smaller states. In fact, one student may represent a state such as Montana that has only 3 electoral votes.

In the case of a simulation that involves several classes, each class will probably be assigned several states and groups of students will be assigned to each state. When the students assigned to a state (Ohio, for instance) vote, the candidate who receives the majority of the votes gets all 20 of Ohio's electoral votes. Other students in the class will be assigned to different states and their votes are allocated to the winning candidate in the same manner.

Dividing Electors

Once you have calculated how many electoral votes each student in your group should represent, you must decide how you will divide up the states and their electoral votes so that each student has roughly the same number of votes. To do this, refer to the list or map that shows how many electors each state is allocated. Begin grouping states so that the total number of electors for any one group or individual is approximately the number you have calculated to be the appropriate number for each of your students.

For instance, if you had 15 students, you would divide 538 by 15 and get 36, you would look at the list of states and their electors and try to group them so that the total of each grouping is about 36. The example shown on page 21 shows one example of how this could be done.

In the example on the previous page with 46 students, each student is worth approximately 12 electoral votes. If Texas had three students representing it, they would each cast a vote (this is the popular vote). Whichever candidate got the majority of the three votes would get all of the electoral votes. Prior to the election the three students representing the Texas voting bloc will be given an electoral ballot with Texas and its electoral votes listed on the ballot. When the popular votes are tallied, the candidate receiving the most votes will receive all of the electoral votes. The result is recorded on the electoral vote ballot.

If you have a small group of students, you may not be able to maintain a balanced ratio. In this case, try to group the states as evenly as possible and assign them randomly or have students draw for them.

Let students know before election day which states they represent. On election day, distribute ballots with individual state names and corresponding electoral votes to the students representing these states.

Caution

If you have an even number of students representing one state, determine beforehand how you will break a tie should they not be able to agree on a candidate. One possible solution would be drawing a candidate's name from a hat. The name drawn would get all the electoral votes. Be sure this is done before tallies are made so that students are not influenced by the possible outcome.

Sample Distribution of Electoral Votes

This is a sample of how one teacher divided the electoral votes. This example is based on a class of 15 students. In the distribution, you would try to come as close to 36 votes for each elector as possible (538 ÷ 15 = 36). There are, of course various ways to divide up the votes and still have a fair distribution. This is one way that this can be done.

Voter 1

California	55
total	**55**

Voter 2

Texas	34
New Mexico	5
Arizona	10
total	**49**

Voter 3

Florida	27
Georgia	15
So. Carolina	8
total	**50**

Voter 4

Illinois	21
Missouri	11
Nebraska	5
Kansas	6
So. Dakota	3
total	**46**

Voter 5

Louisiana	9
Arkansas	6
Oklahoma	7
Alabama	9
Mississippi	6
total	**37**

Voter 6

Ohio	20
Kentucky	8
Tennessee	11
total	**39**

Voter 7

Michigan	17
Indiana	11
total	**28**

Voter 8

Pennsylvania	21
West Virginia	5
total	**26**

Voter 9

North Dakota	3
Wisconsin	10
Minnesota	10
Iowa	7
total	**30**

Voter 10

Utah	5
Nevada	5
Montana	3
Wyoming	3
Colorado	9
total	**25**

Voter 11

Massachusetts	12
Maine	4
New Hampshire	4
Vermont	3
Rhode Island	4
Connecticut	7
total	**34**

Voter 12

Washington	11
Oregon	7
Idaho	4
Alaska	3
Hawaii	4
total	**29**

Voter 13

Virginia	13
North Carolina	15
total	**28**

Voter 14

New Jersey	15
Delaware	3
Maryland	10
Dist. of Columbia	3
total	**31**

Voter 15

New York	31
total	**31**

The total electors for all the states is 538. In this case, it is possible for a candidate to receive only the popular vote for the first six states and receive 276 electoral votes and thereby win the election.

Sample Distribution of Electoral Votes

15 Students

Random selection of votes per student (range from 25 to 55 votes per student).

	EV	Fair		Right	
		EV	PV	EV	PV
Voter 1			1		
California	55	55			
total	**55**	**55**			
Voter 2			1		
Texas	34	34			
New Mexico	5	5			
Arizona	10	10			
total	**49**	**49**			
Voter 3			1		
Florida	27	27			
Georgia	15	15			
So. Carolina	8	8			
total	**50**	**50**			
Voter 4			1		
Illinois	21	21			
Missouri	11	11			
Nebraska	5	5			
Kansas	6	6			
So. Dakota	3	3			
total	**46**	**46**			
Voter 5			1		
Louisiana	9	9			
Arkansas	6	6			
Oklahoma	7	7			
Alabama	9	9			
Mississippi	6	6			
total	**37**	**37**			

EV = electoral vote **PV** = popular vote

	EV	Fair		Right	
		EV	PV	EV	PV
Voter 6			1		
Ohio	20	20			
Kentucky	8	8			
Tennessee	11	11			
total	**39**	**39**			
Voter 7					1
Michigan	17			17	
Indiana	11			17	
total	**28**			**28**	
Voter 8					1
Pennsylvania	21			21	
West Virginia	5			5	
total	**26**			**26**	
Voter 9					1
North Dakota	3			3	
Wisconsin	10			10	
Minnesota	10			10	
Iowa	7			7	
total	**30**			**30**	
Voter 10					1
Utah	5			5	
Nevada	5			5	
Montana	3			3	
Wyoming	3			3	
Colorado	9			9	
total	**25**			**25**	

In this example, the Fair and Square Party wins the election with 276 electoral votes.

	EV	Fair		Right	
		EV	PV	EV	PV
Voter 11					1
Massachusetts	12			12	
Maine	4			4	
N. Hampshire	4			4	
Vermont	3			3	
Rhode Island	4			4	
Connecticut	7			7	
total	**34**			**34**	
Voter 12					1
Washington	11			11	
Oregon	7			11	
Idaho	4			4	
Alaska	3			3	
Hawaii	4			4	
total	**29**			**29**	
Voter 13					1
Virginia	13			13	
North Carolina	15			15	
total	**28**			**28**	
Voter 14					1
New Jersey	15			15	
Delaware	3			3	
Maryland	10			10	
Dist. of Col.	3			3	
total	**31**			**31**	
Voter 15					1
New York	31			31	
total	**31**			**31**	
Grand totals	**538**	**276**	**6**	**262**	**9**

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Sample Distribution of Electoral Votes

46 Students

Ratio for each student vote = 11.70 electoral votes
Range is 10 to 15 votes per student.

	EV	Fair		Right	
		EV	PV	EV	PV
Voters 1-5 (5)			3		2
California	55	55			
Voters 6-8 (3)			2		1
Florida	27	27			
Rhode Island	4	4			
Voters 9-11 (3)			1		2
Illinois	21			21	
Nevada	5			5	
S. Dakota	3			3	
Voters 12-14 (3)			1		2
New York	31			31	
N. Hampshire	4			4	
Voters 15-17 (3)			1		2
Texas	34			34	
Voters 18-20 (3)			1		2
Ohio	20			20	
Colorado	9			9	
Delaware	3			3	
Voters 21-23 (3)			1		2
Pennsylvania	21			21	
Michigan	17			17	
Voter 24 (1)			1		
N. Dakota	3	3			
S. Carolina	8	8			
Voter 25 (1)			1		
N. Carolina	15	15			
Voter 26 (1)			1		
New Jersey	15	15			

EV = electoral vote **PV** = popular vote

	EV	Fair		Right	
		EV	PV	EV	PV
Voter 27 (1)			1		
Indiana	11	11			
Voter 28 (1)			1		
Massachusetts	12	12			
Voter 29 (1)					1
Georgia	15			15	
Voter 30 (1)					1
Arizona	10			10	
Wyoming	3			3	
Voter 31 (1)			1		
Maryland	10	10			
Voter 32 (1)			1		
Washington	11	11			
Voter 33 (1)			1		
Virginia	13	13			
Voter 34 (1)					1
Tennessee	11			11	
Voter 35 (1)					1
Wisconsin	10			10	
Vermont	3			3	
Voter 36 (1)			1		
Minnesota	10	10			
W. Virginia	5	5			
Voter 37 (1)			1		
Missouri	11	11			
Voter 38 (1)			1		
Alabama	9	9			
Alaska	3	3			

	EV	Fair		Right	
		EV	PV	EV	PV
Voter 39 (1)			1		
Arkansas	6	6			
Connecticut	7	7			
Voter 40 (1)			1		
Dist. of Columbia	3	3			
Hawaii	4	4			
Idaho	4	4			
Voter 41 (1)					1
Iowa	7			7	
Kansas	6			6	
Voter 42 (1)					1
Kentucky	8			8	
Maine	4			4	
Voter 43 (1)					1
Louisiana	9			9	
Montana	3			3	
Voter 44 (1)					1
Mississippi	6			6	
Nebraska	5			5	
Voter 45 (1)					1
New Mexico	5			5	
Oklahoma	7			7	
Voter 46 (1)			1		
Oregon	7	7			
Utah	5	5			
Grand totals	**538**	**258**	**24**	**280**	**22**

In this example, the Do Right Party wins the election with 280 electoral votes.

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Sample Distribution of Electoral Votes

240 Students

Ratio for each student vote = 2.41 electoral votes
Range is 2 to 5 votes per student.

	EV	Fair		Right	
		EV	PV	EV	PV
Class 1 (26)					
voters 1-11 (11) Ohio	20	20	7		4
voters 12-18 (7) N. Carolina	15	15	4		3
voter 19 (1) Delaware	3	3	1		
voters 20-24 (5) Georgia	15		2	15	3
voters 25-26 (2) W. Virginia	5	5	2		
Class 2 (27)					
voters 1-9 (9) Illinois	21		4	21	5
voter 10 (1) Hawaii	4	4	1		
voter 11 (1) Montana	3	3	1		
voters 12-16 (5) Arizona	10		2	10	3
voters 17-23 (7) Virginia	13		3	13	4
voters 24-26 (3) Kentucky	8		1	8	2
voter 27 (1) Maine	4	4	1		
Class 3 (19)					
voters 1-5 (5) Washington	11	11	3		2
voters 6-8 (3) Colorado	9		1	9	2
voters 9-11 (3) Nevada	5		1	5	2
voter 12 (1) S. Dakota	3			3	1
voters 13-15 (3) Oregon	7	7	2		1
voter 16 (1) Idaho	4	4	1		
voters 17-19 (3) Kansas	6	6	2		1

	EV	Fair		Right	
		EV	PV	EV	PV
Class 4 (27)					
voters 1-27 (27) California	55		10	55	17
Class 5 (25)					
voters 1-17 (17) Texas	34	34	13		4
voters 18-22 (5) Oklahoma	7		2	7	3
voters 23-25 (3) New Mexico	5	5	2		1
Class 6 (25)					
voters 1-13 (13) Florida	27		6	27	7
voters 14-24 (11) Pennsylvania	21		4	21	7
voter 25 (1) Wyoming	3			3	1
Class 7 (23)					
voters 1-9 (9) Michigan	17		4	17	5
voters 10-12 (3) Minnesota	10	10	2		1
voters 13-15 (3) Wisconsin	10	10	2		1
voters 16-20 (5) Indiana	11		2	11	3
voters 21-23 (3) Iowa	7	7	2		1
Class 8 (25)					
voters 1-7 (7) New Jersey	15		3	15	4
voters 8-20 (13) New York	31	31	7		6
voter 21 (1) Arkansas	6	6	1		
voter 22 (1) N. Dakota	3			3	1
Voters 23-25 (3) S. Carolina	8	8	2		1

	EV	Fair		Right	
		EV	PV	EV	PV
Class 9 (20)					
voters 1-7 (7) Massachusetts	12		3	12	4
voters 8-12 (5) Missouri	11		1	11	4
voter 13 (1) Utah	5	5	1		
voters 14-16 (3) Connecticut	7		1	7	2
voter 17 (1) Vermont	3	3	1		
voter 18 (1) Rhode Island	4	4	1		
voter 19 (1) N. Hampshire	4			4	1
voter 20 (1) Dist. Columbia	3			3	1
Class 10 (23)					
voters 1-5 (5) Maryland	10		2	10	3
voters 6-12 (7) Tennessee	11	11	4		3
voters 13-15 (3) Louisiana	9	9	2		1
voters 16-18 (3) Alabama	9		1	9	2
voter 19 (1) Alaska	3	3	1		
voters 20-22 (3) Mississippi	6		1	6	2
voter 23 (1) Nebraska	5			5	1
Grand totals	**538**	**228**	**120**	**310**	**120**

In this example, the Do Right Party wins the election with 310 electoral votes.

EV = electoral vote **PV** = popular vote

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Allocation of Electoral Votes

and Results of the Election

	EV	Fair		Right	
		EV	PV	EV	PV

	EV	Fair		Right	
		EV	PV	EV	PV

	EV	Fair		Right	
		EV	PV	EV	PV

When possible, to avoid a tie, no voting bloc should have an even number of voters. The candidate with a majority of popular votes in a bloc gets the entire electoral votes for all states in that bloc.

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Declaration of Candidacy

As a member of the _____ party,

I, _____, do hereby declare that I am a candidate for president of the United States of America.

I certify that I meet the requirements for candidacy as set forth in the Eligibility Rules for President of the United State of America.

I promise that should I be elected, I will faithfully execute the office of President of the United States and will, to the best of my ability, preserve, protect and defend the Constitution of the United State of America.

_____

candidate's signature

_____

print or type name

_____

date

Endorsed by:

_____

_____

Endorsements may be optional

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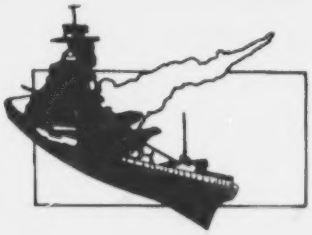
☆ Election Issues ☆

Military Appropriations

The United States must have the best military forces in the world if we are going to remain a strong nation. Defense of our nation is our country's highest priority and a large part of the budget should support this function.



While the military is important, it is more important to work with other nations to maintain peaceful relationships so we don't have to spend a lot of money on military forces. It would be better to spend this money on education and the environment.

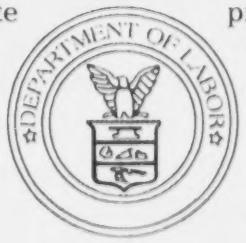
Health Services

We have the best hospitals and health care in the world. Some other countries control health care (socialized medicine), and their citizens do not have the quality of medical care that we do. The government should assure basic medical services only to poor and older citizens. Everyone else should pay for their own health services.

Too many people do not have adequate health care. As medical services get more expensive, it is harder for people to pay for doctors and prescriptions. It is up to the government to make sure that everyone receives good, economical medical care.

Unemployment

There are times when there will be unemployment. It is up to private industry to provide jobs. Government should not get involved in regulating business, providing employment, or setting up training programs.



Businesses do what is best for their profits, not what is best for their employees. Unemployment creates many other social problems. The government must create jobs or offer incentives to businesses so that everyone who wants a job will have a job.

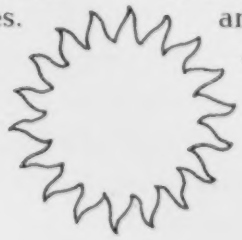
Women's Rights

Since many women have children to care for, they cannot devote as much time and energy to their jobs as men can. It is unfair to expect women to receive the same salary and have the same opportunities as men who do not take time from their jobs for maternity leave or to care of a sick child or relative.

Women contribute important skills to the workforce and should have the same rights and opportunities to advance in their jobs as men. Women should be paid the same as men who hold the same job. We need legislation that will force employers to treat women fairly.

Energy Policy

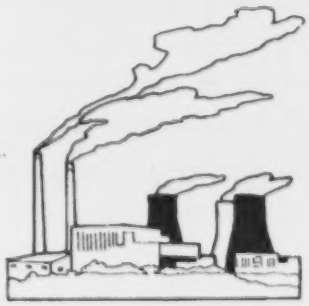
The United States government should encourage and help pay for solar power and other renewable energy sources. We have to stop our dependence on oil companies. The government should have greater control over these companies and be able to control high prices for gas and oil.



The only way to be truly independent is to end government controls on prices or any part of the energy industry. Allow the industry to do what it does best – bring low cost oil and gas products to everyone – and prices will stay low.

Nuclear Power

We should use other energy sources that are safer than nuclear energy to manufacture electricity. If there were an accident in a nuclear power plant, many people would be killed or suffer long- term health effects. The government should not license any more nuclear power plants and should fund research to develop safer power sources.



Nuclear power plants have been in operation for many years and are a safe, clean method of providing energy. Other power sources such as coal-burning plants pollute the air. The government should give special consideration and funding to companies that are constructing nuclear power plants.

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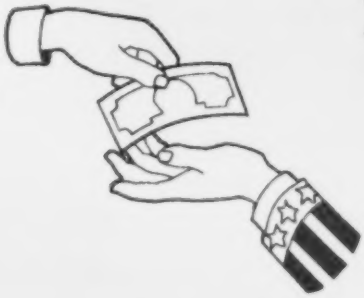
Taxes

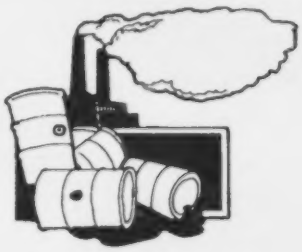
The government must have enough income (taxes) to pay for all of its programs. The things the government spends money on are worthwhile projects that pay for services that all (or most) people need. If the government does not have enough money, it takes out loans and that ends up costing tax payers a lot more money in the long run.



The government should not levy high taxes on people. If people have money in their pockets, they will spend it, and that will create more jobs and a better economy. Many of the services provided by the government could be paid for by the citizens themselves if they needed the service.

Environment

Our future as a species depends on our ability to take care of our planet. If we pollute our air and water and cut down all our forests, we will be harming not only humans but also other animals. The government should have regulations that discourage people and companies from ruining the environment.



When we put restraints on companies and force them to clean up pollution it ends up costing them a lot of money. They pass this cost on to the consumer. This is bad for the economy. If we just leave companies alone, they will do what is reasonable. Besides, there's not really as much of an environmental problem as some people would have you believe.

Gun Control

The right to bear arms was intended for a different time. Guns are most often used to commit crimes. Guns for hunting are okay, but no one needs semi-automatic weapons. By controlling the sale and registration of guns, the government can make sure guns do not get into the hands of people who will use them to harm other people.

The right to carry a gun is guaranteed by the Bill of Rights. This means anyone should be able to own and carry any kind of gun they want. There should be no restrictions or background checks.

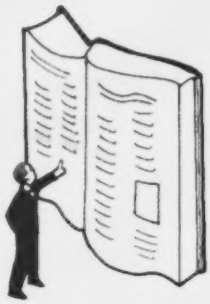
Free Speech

People should be able to say anything they want at any time and via any media. We are guaranteed freedom of speech in the Bill of Rights and that means that there should be no restrictions on what you say.

You are free to speak, but there have to be some limitations on language that is hateful, offensive or objectionable to other people.

Education

Education is a function of the states and the federal government should not get involved. It is up to each state to fund its schools and set standards for its students. If some states have more money to give to schools and, hence, its students get a better education, that's not a big problem.



It is important that all school children in the country have a good education. There should be national educational standards for all school children and children should be tested each year to make sure they are meeting these standards. The federal government should give poorer schools money so they can provide an education equal to the richer schools.

Federal Lands

The role of the federal government should be to preserve land and make it available for all people to enjoy, both now and in the future. This should be done through national parks, forests and wilderness areas. Our environment is very fragile, and the lands that the government owns are in areas that are easily spoiled. The government should protect these areas and make sure people don't damage or exploit them.

The federal government already owns too much land. It should not acquire any additional land. When it owns land that could be used for other things (mining, oil exploration, logging, or grazing), it should rent the land to private companies and let them use the resources. It makes no sense to leave these resources untapped when they could be used to provide income and energy.

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Electoral Votes for Each State

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Voter Registration

voter's name (printed)	**voter's signature** at time of registration	**voter's signature** on election day	**signature verified**

To Register: Have the voter print his or her name in the first column and write his or her signature in the second column.

To Vote: On election day, have the voter sign in the third column next to his or her name. The two signatures will be compared and verified by an election official who will initial the last column.

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Assignment of Electoral College Vote

★★★★★

U.S. Presidential Election

Name _____

(name of student or class)

You have been assigned the following states and electoral votes.

State	Votes

Assignment of Electoral College Vote

★★★★★

U.S. Presidential Election

Name _____

(name of student or class)

You have been assigned the following states and electoral votes.

State	Votes

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Ballot — Popular Vote

✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

U.S. Presidential Election

Make one choice for President and Vice President.

☐ Do Right Party

_____

_____

candidates' names

☐ Fair and Square Party

_____

_____

candidates' names

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Ballot — Popular Vote

✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

U.S. Presidential Election

Make one choice for President and Vice President.

☐ Do Right Party

_____

_____

candidates' names

☐ Fair and Square Party

_____

_____

candidates' names

Ballot — Electoral Vote

✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

U.S. Presidential Election

State _____

Votes _____

Make one choice for President and Vice President.

☐ Do Right Party

_____

_____

candidates' names

☐ Fair and Square Party

_____

_____

candidates' names

Ballot — Electoral Vote

✪ ✪ ✪ ✪ ✪

U.S. Presidential Election

State _____

Votes _____

Make one choice for President and Vice President.

☐ Do Right Party

_____

_____

candidates' names

☐ Fair and Square Party

_____

_____

candidates' names

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☆ Election Vote Tally ☆

States	Electoral votes	Parties			
		Do Right		Fair/Square	
		popular votes	electoral votes	popular votes	electoral votes
Alabama	9				
Alaska	3				
Arizona	10				
Arkansas	6				
California	55				
Colorado	9				
Connecticut	7				
Delaware	3				
Dist. of Columbia	3				
Florida	27				
Georgia	15				
Hawaii	4				
Idaho	4				
Illinois	21				
Indiana	11				
Iowa	7				
Kansas	6				
Kentucky	8				
Louisiana	9				
Maine	4				
Maryland	10				
Massachusetts	12				
Michigan	17				
Minnesota	10				
Mississippi	6				
Missouri	11				
Montana	3				

States	Electoral votes	Parties			
		Do Right		Fair/Square	
		popular votes	electoral votes	popular votes	electoral votes
Nebraska	5				
Nevada	5				
New Hampshire	4				
New Jersey	15				
New Mexico	5				
New York	31				
North Carolina	15				
North Dakota	3				
Ohio	20				
Oklahoma	7				
Oregon	7				
Pennsylvania	21				
Rhode Island	4				
South Carolina	8				
South Dakota	3				
Tennessee	11				
Texas	34				
Utah	5				
Vermont	3				
Virginia	13				
Washington	11				
West Virginia	5				
Wisconsin	10				
Wyoming	3				
Total (both columns)	538				

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Election Vote Tally

State Votes for an Election Year

	Electoral votes	Democrat	Republican	Third Party
Alabama	9	❑	❑	❑
Alaska	3	❑	❑	❑
Arizona	10	❑	❑	❑
Arkansas	6	❑	❑	❑
California	55	❑	❑	❑
Colorado	9	❑	❑	❑
Connecticut	7	❑	❑	❑
Delaware	3	❑	❑	❑
Dist. of Columbia	3	❑	❑	❑
Florida	27	❑	❑	❑
Georgia	15	❑	❑	❑
Hawaii	4	❑	❑	❑
Idaho	4	❑	❑	❑
Illinois	21	❑	❑	❑
Indiana	11	❑	❑	❑
Iowa	7	❑	❑	❑
Kansas	6	❑	❑	❑
Kentucky	8	❑	❑	❑
Louisiana	9	❑	❑	❑
Maine	4	❑	❑	❑
Maryland	10	❑	❑	❑
Massachusetts	12	❑	❑	❑
Michigan	17	❑	❑	❑
Minnesota	10	❑	❑	❑
Mississippi	6	❑	❑	❑
Missouri	11	❑	❑	❑

		Democrat	Republican	Third Party
Montana	3	❑	❑	❑
Nebraska	5	❑	❑	❑
Nevada	5	❑	❑	❑
New Hampshire	4	❑	❑	❑
New Jersey	15	❑	❑	❑
New Mexico	5	❑	❑	❑
New York	31	❑	❑	❑
North Carolina	15	❑	❑	❑
North Dakota	3	❑	❑	❑
Ohio	20	❑	❑	❑
Oklahoma	7	❑	❑	❑
Oregon	7	❑	❑	❑
Pennsylvania	21	❑	❑	❑
Rhode Island	4	❑	❑	❑
South Carolina	8	❑	❑	❑
South Dakota	3	❑	❑	❑
Tennessee	11	❑	❑	❑
Texas	34	❑	❑	❑
Utah	5	❑	❑	❑
Vermont	3	❑	❑	❑
Virginia	13	❑	❑	❑
Washington	11	❑	❑	❑
West Virginia	5	❑	❑	❑
Wisconsin	10	❑	❑	❑
Wyoming	3	❑	❑	❑
Vote Totals		___	___	___

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Electing Our President

Simulation Overview

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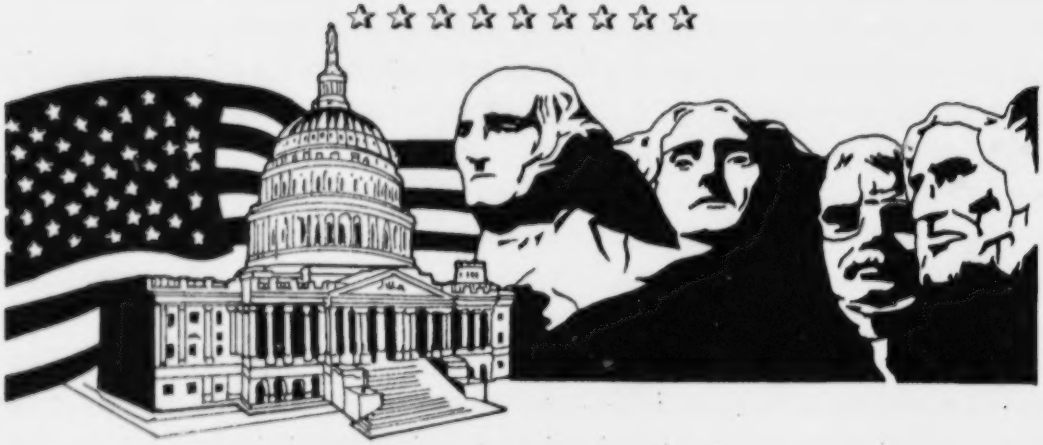

It's an election year. For some time you've been hearing advertisements on television and radio supporting various people who are running for election. You have noticed mail coming to your house telling you that you should vote for certain candidates. This year you are very interested in all the political messages, because this year you are very involved in the election process.

This year you are going to be an elector for your state. You realize that this is a very important position. It is the link between the popular votes (the vote that takes place in November when all registered voters can vote for the candidates of their choice) and the selection of a president. You represent one party, either the Fair and Square Party or the Do Right Party. Once the popular vote has taken place, if your party wins the majority of popular votes, you will be able to cast your elector votes for your party's candidate. You hope your party's candidate wins at the polls in November because then you can exercise your duties as an elector.

As you and your classmates work through this simulation, you will see how a real election works. From the very beginning, when several people decide that they want to run for president, through the campaigning and election, to the final vote of the electors, you will take an active part in the election process. You will get the opportunity to be an elector that represents one or more states. As the elector from this state (or states), you will cast your vote for your party's candidate if this candidate won the popular vote. You will be the official link between the popular vote (the total of all the votes cast at polling places throughout your state) and who is actually elected president and vice president. This will help you understand our political system and be a more informed voter when you are old enough to cast your vote in a real election.

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The Election Process

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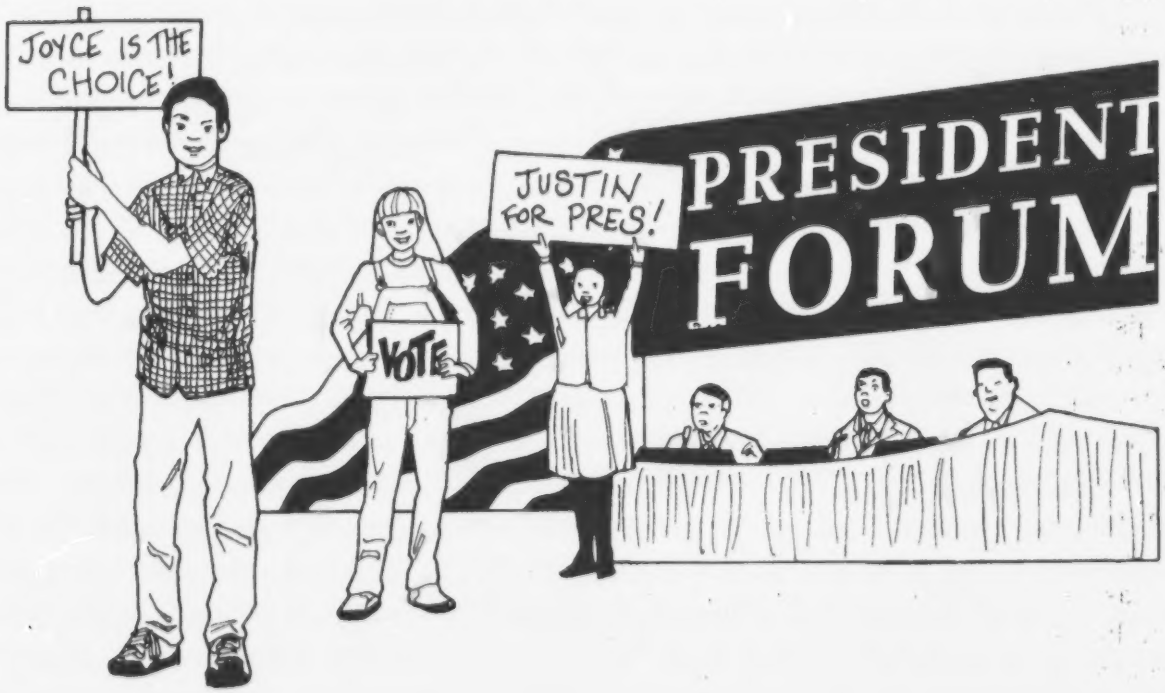
The Constitution of the United States provides a unique method of electing our president and vice president. In most elections, the candidate receiving the most votes is the winner; however, in our presidential elections, the final decision is made by the Electoral College. Does this mean that the vote cast by each citizen does not count? Not at all. Here is the way our system works.

Choosing a Candidate

Presidential elections are held every four years in November. Primary elections are held in many states during the spring prior to the November election. During the primary elections, voters select from a large number of candidates, often several candidates from each party. There are several political parties in the United States – Green, Reform, Libertarian, Peace and Freedom, as well as the two largest, the Republican and Democratic parties. While candidates from all parties are on the ballots for both the primaries and the election, and all parties hold conventions, the two largest parties usually get most of the attention.



During the summer before the election, conventions are held by the political parties. At these conventions, the delegates vote for the candidate who the majority of the voters from that party in their state has selected. If no candidate is selected on the first ballot, the delegates are free to vote for the candidate of their choice on subsequent ballots.

For example:

The ABC party has three candidates running for president – Mr. X, Ms. Y and Mr. Z. These candidates have received votes in primary elections. In the California primary, Mr. X has received the majority of the popular vote. On the first ballot, all of the members of the California delegation must vote for Mr. X. When the votes are counted, Mr. X does not have a majority. A second ballot must be taken. Now the delegates of all of the state delegations may vote as they wish. Some of the California delegates continue to vote for Mr. X, but others vote for Ms. Y and Mr. Z. When the votes from the second ballot are counted, Ms. Y has a majority and becomes the party's presidential candidate.

Thus, each party will have a presidential candidate who will compete with all the other parties' candidates. Once the presidential candidate is selected, he or she chooses someone who will be a vice presidential running mate. The two together are sometimes referred to as the "presidential ticket." There are always other candidates in the running besides the Republican and Democratic nominees, but the nominee from one of the two largest parties usually wins.

DNC
DEMOCRATIC NATIONAL COMMITTEE

REPUBLICAN NATIONAL COMMITTEE

PEACE AND FREEDOM PARTY

LIBERTARIAN CAMPAIGNS

THE GREENS
Green Party USA

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Campaigning

Between the end of the conventions and election day, there is intense campaigning by the presidential and vice presidential candidates. This campaigning might take the form of advertisements on TV, radio, or in the newspapers, personal appearances throughout the country, special mailings, televised debates, and telemarketing. In each instance, candidates give their viewpoints on certain issues and each tries to convince the voters that he or she would be the best individual to fill the role of president or vice president.

The Popular Vote

On election day, which is the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November, voters go to the polls to cast their votes for the candidates of their choice. At this time, there might also be an election for local or state officials and for members of the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate. There may also be questions on the ballot asking the voters to decide on a particular issue. For example, "Should a local or state government be allowed to spend money on the construction of a new office building?"

The votes cast by individual voters are called the popular vote. This is the first step in electing the president; however, the president is not actually chosen by popular vote. The candidate who receives the most votes in a state wins all of the electoral votes for the state. The elector votes are what actually determine who will be president.

To determine the number of electoral votes, the number of members the state has in the U.S. House of Representatives is added to the two senators that each state has in the U.S. Senate.

For example

The state of Florida has the following:

representatives	*25*
senators	*2*
Total electoral votes	*27*

When Americans vote for a president and vice president, they are really voting for a slate of electors who pledge to vote for their candidates. In all, there are 538 electoral votes, and a majority (more than half), or 270 votes, is needed to elect a president and vice president. It is possible to win the popular vote and lose the election. This has happened three times in our history.

The Electoral College

The victorious presidential and vice presidential nominees in each state win the state's entire electoral vote no matter how small their margin of victory. After the popular vote is counted in each state, the candidate receiving the most votes is awarded all of that state's electoral votes. Maine and Nebraska are the only states that do not have a winner-take-all way to allocate electoral votes.

For example:

If 1,509,734 of the voters in the state of Minnesota voted for Willy Wannabe of the Republican party and 1,509,101 voters cast their votes for Elmer Electme of the Democratic party, the Republican candidate would get all of Minnesota's electoral votes and the Democratic candidate would get none.

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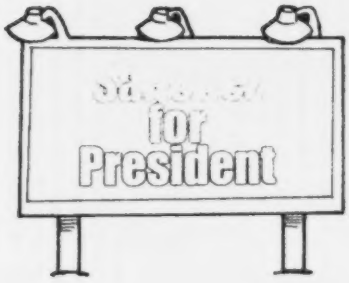
In December, the electors from the party whose candidates have received the most popular votes meet in their state capitals and cast their ballots for their state's candidates. The candidates who receive the majority of the electoral votes win the office of president and vice president.

For example:

The Republican candidate wins 265 electoral votes.
The Democratic candidate wins 270 electoral votes.
The Libertarian candidate wins 3 electoral votes.
The winner will be the Democratic candidate.

Steps to the Presidency

1. Declaration - Candidates declare their intention to run for president.



2. Primary Elections - Candidates compete in the primary elections in various states.

3. Conventions - The parties hold their conventions to select the party's candidates and decide on its platform.

4. Campaigns - The presidential and vice presidential candidates for each party campaign in all states.

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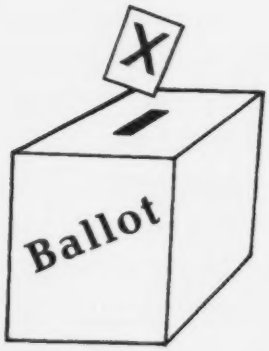
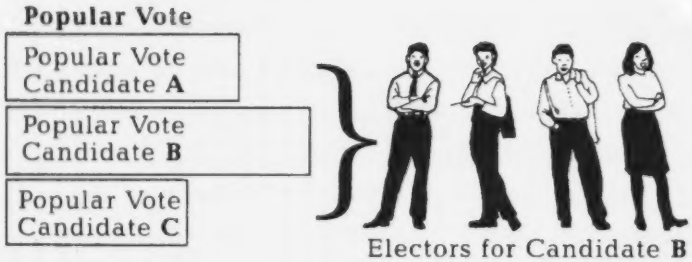
5. Popular Vote - The election is held in November and all registered voters cast their ballots for their favorite presidential candidate. The person who wins the popular votes wins all the elector votes for that state.



6. Electoral Vote - The electors from the winning party of each state meet and cast their votes for their party's choice for president and vice president.



7. Winner Declared - The person with the most electoral votes becomes president. His or her running mate becomes vice president.

The Constitution of the United States

Article II

[1] The executive Power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his Office during the term of four years, and together with the Vice President, chosen for the same term, be elected, as follows.

[2] Each state shall appoint, in such manner as the legislature thereof may direct, a number of Electors, equal to the whole number of Senators and Representatives to which the State may be entitled in the Congress; but no Senator or Representative, or person holding an office of trust or profit under the United States shall be appointed an Elector.

[3] *This clause, included in the original Constitution, has been eliminated here because it was superseded by Amendment XII.*

[4] The Congress may determine the time of choosing the Electors and the day on which they shall give their votes, which day shall be the same throughout the United States.

[5] No person except a natural born citizen, or a citizen of the United States, at the time of the Adoption of this Constitution, shall be eligible to the office of President; neither shall any person be eligible to that office who shall not have attained to the age of thirty-five years, and been fourteen years a resident within the United States.

Note: Additional parts of this section define the rules for succession, oath of office and compensation for the president.

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Amendment XII (Proposed by Congress Dec. 9, 1803; ratified June 15, 1804)

The Electors shall meet in their respective states and vote by ballot for President and Vice President, one of whom, at least shall not be an inhabitant of the same state with themselves; they shall name in their ballots the person voted for as Vice President, and they shall make distinct lists of all persons voted for as President, and of all persons voted for as Vice President, and the number of votes for each, which lists they shall sign and certify, and transmit sealed to the seat of the government of the United States, directed to the President of the Senate. The President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and House of Representatives, open all the certificates and the votes shall then be counted. The person having the greatest number of votes for President shall be the President, if such number be a majority of the whole number of Electors appointed; and if no person have such majority, then from the persons having the highest numbers not exceeding three on the list of those voted for as President, the House of Representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President. But in choosing the President the votes shall be taken by States, the representation from each State having one vote; a quorum for this purpose shall consist of a member or members from two-thirds of the States, and a majority of all States shall be necessary to a choice.

A clause is included here in the original Constitution providing for the Vice President to act as President if the House did not choose in a timely fashion. This was superseded by Section 3 of Amendment XX.

The person having the greatest number of votes as Vice President shall be the Vice President, if such number be a majority of the whole number Electors appointed; and if no person have a majority, then from the two highest numbers on the list the Senate shall choose the Vice President; a quorum for the purpose shall consist of two-thirds of the whole number of Senators, and a majority of the whole number shall be necessary to a choice. But no person constitutionally ineligible to the office of President shall be eligible to that of Vice President of the United States.

These are the original words of Article II and Amendment XII of the U.S. Constitution.

DL 145

Grades 4-8

ELECTING The President

The Electoral Process in Action

Electing the president and vice president is a basic right and responsibility of every citizen of voting age, yet the complexities of electing our president is not a concept that everyone understands. *Electing Our President* fills the gap in understanding by providing students with a learning-by-doing experience. In this week-long simulation they become the candidates, the conventioneers, the voters, and Electoral College electors and are able to understand how the popular vote that is cast at the polls relates to the final selection of the president and vice president. While this lesson involves important concepts for social studies education, it also provides opportunities for researching, persuasive writing and speaking, organization, and math applications. This motivating activity unites significant concepts and solid education with an enticing format.

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